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December 10, 2009

Director of the United States Patent & Trademark Office

PO Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Director:

I am writing this letter in reference to patent number 6990392. I have two complaints that I would like to register with you. The first is the inordinate amount of time that our examiner has spent on our claims. We began this process in the year 2000 and waded through over 60 pieces of art. We felt good about that fact and were very pleased when we received our patent in January of 2006. However, when we filed for extensions we were presented with another piece of art that should have been found way back in 2006 as it is so close to ours that it may indeed negate some or even all of our claims. As such, we feel that we have been taken advantage of and that our claims were not taken seriously. We became a "fee payer" to the office. Being very small businessmen we do not have the pockets of large pharma or oil. Rather we are scrapping trying to start a business as well as fund our lawyer and the patent office.

Now to my second complaint, it too deals with fees. Just what exactly does the maintenance fee cover? In this day and age of computers and data libraries it is my surmise that this type of fee should be much lower than \$555. Again, it gives us the impression that we are just considered a fee payer to the office and that our claims are not taken seriously.

We are very upset over the situation given that our claims may be totally negated by Examiner Collins. As such, we have and are continuing to press our case with our local Senators and Congressional Representatives. This entire process is unfair to a struggling and barely surviving small business. And your examiner is not exercising fairness when it comes to our claims. Hiding a previous piece of art that is over 10 years is very close to fraud.

Any help you could afford us would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

David A. Tracy
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